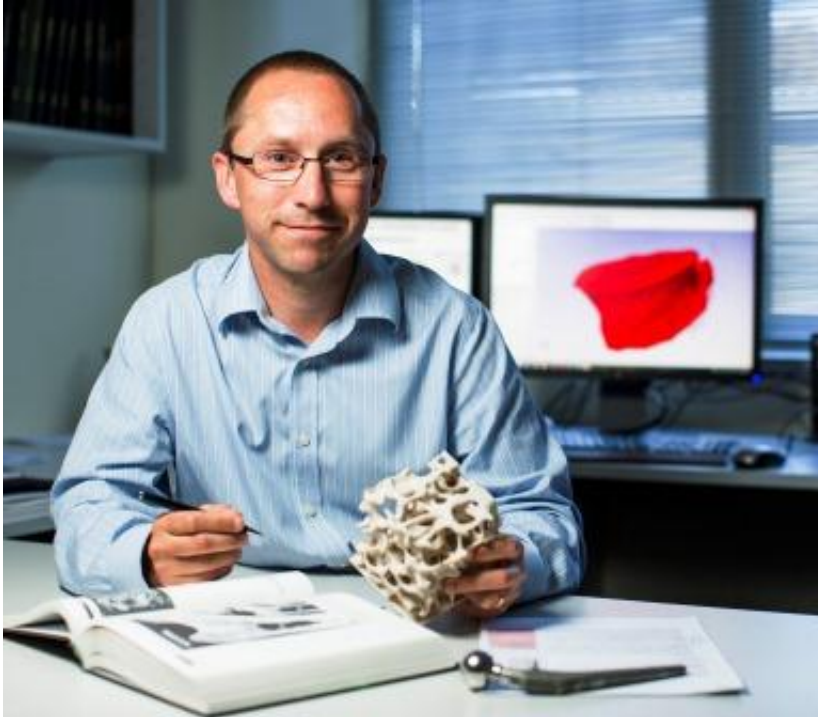


# Global experts debate dodgy joint implants

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Flinders Strategic Professor of Biomedical Engineering Mark Taylor.

International, interstate and local leaders from the orthopaedics field will converge on Flinders University Victoria Square this week to explore new ways to screen out poorly designed orthopaedic devices, including hip and knee replacements.

Hosted by the Flinders Medical Device Research Institute (MDRI) through a \$20,000 State Government grant, the two-day workshop on May 7 to 8 will bring together leading researchers, clinicians and

industry representatives from Austria, the UK, Italy, the Netherlands and Australia.

Flinders Strategic Professor of Biomedical Engineering Mark Taylor said the objective of the workshop is to review the current techniques used to assess joint implants and to define priority areas for enhanced testing of new devices in the future.

"One of the biggest problems with orthopaedic devices is that even though they're regulated, current tests are not sophisticated enough to screen out poor implant designs before they reach clinical trials," Professor Taylor, who is co-hosting the event with MDRI Director Professor Karen Reynolds, said.

"Australia has a comprehensive [joint replacement](#) register that has been successfully used to identify implants with below standard performance and this has led to their withdrawal," he said.

"However, greater emphasis needs to be placed on better evaluating new devices before clinical use to ensure that poor designs never reach the patient.

"The idea of the workshop is to bring together some of the best orthopaedic experts in the world to identify where we should be going, in terms of the way that implants should be tested, and what we need to do to get there."

Planned actions to arise from the workshop include producing a white paper on the future development of assessment methods and their role in product registration and certification, and exploring mechanisms to support staff/student exchanges.

The Australian Orthopaedic Association's National Joint Replacement

Registry contains information on 800,000 hip and knee replacements in which were implanted up to 2013.

Figures show that there were 38,500 hip replacement surgeries and 48,500 [knee replacement](#) surgeries recorded in 2012 at a cost of around \$1 billion. This included approximately 8,000 surgeries to replace failed joint replacements.

With the number of joint replacements significantly rising worldwide, Professor Taylor said we need to minimise the failure rates as much as possible.

"There are about one million hip and knee replacements around the world each year and even if we achieve less than five per cent failure at the 10-year mark, that still translates to 50,000 patients needing to go back to the operating table.

"Subsequent replacements cost thousands of dollars, they're obviously painful and the outcome is not as good the second time round, so we need get it right the first time if at all possible."

Provided by Flinders University

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